

The effects of Extensive Reading and Task-Based Learning Approach on EFL Vocabulary Acquisition In a Colombian University.

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ER AND TBL APPROACH ON EFL VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

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Glossary

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: a psychological condition that affects people's behaviour and attention.

English Foreign Language Learners: students who learn the English language as a second language as it is not used in everyday communication.

Extensive Reading: extensive reading is the process of reading usually long texts with the intention of getting the gist of the text. The texts are usually read for pleasure.

Global Scale of English: it is a standardized scale that measures learners' progress in English proficiency. This scale is based on the European Framework of Reference for each level.

Intensive Reading: intensive reading is the process of reading long texts with the intention of paying attention to specific pieces of information. This type of reading is usually done to fulfil specific learning tasks.

Participant: a person or group of people that participate in a research project.

Second language: a language learned that is not the native language.

Task-Based Learning: task-based learning is a teaching methodology involving the use of authentic language for communication in the solving of meaningful tasks.

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Abstract

Title: The effects of Extensive Reading and Task-Based Learning Approach on EFL Vocabulary Acquisition In a Colombian University.

Authors: Karen Dayana Toscano Rueda, Diego Alejandro Rodriguez Serrato, Gabriel Sáenz Sarmiento.

Keywords: Extensive Reading (ER) Intensive Reading (IR) Task-Based Learning (TBL) English Foreign Language Learners (EFL) Participant (P), Second language (L2), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Global Scale of English (GSE).

Description: Reading is one of the four fundamental skills in any language. It provides the learner with a wide range of linguistic benefits when integrated into their learning process. Moreover, reading becomes relevant at university because it builds students' careers and puts them in contact with various fields of interest. Thus, this research study aimed to demonstrate the impact of this approach on vocabulary acquisition in a group of upper-intermediate English students at a Colombian university. In this investigation, researchers designed a didactic sequence that measures the effectiveness of the ER approach combined with the Task-Based Learning approach. Results revealed that vocabulary acquisition was greatly enhanced when applying ER and TBL in English classrooms. Moreover, contextually dependent vocabulary features such as collocations improved remarkably. Similarly, reading proficiency and lexical knowledge aspects such as spelling, and grammar were enhanced.

* Bachelor Thesis

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Abstracto

Título: Los efectos de la Lectura Extensiva y el Enfoque del Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas en la Adquisición de Vocabulario en Estudiantes de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera.

Autores: Karen Dayana Toscano Rueda, Diego Alejandro Rodriguez Serrato, Gabriel Sáenz Sarmiento.

Palabras clave: Lectura Extensiva (LE), Lectura Intensiva (LI), Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas (ABT), Estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EILE), Participante (P), Segunda Lengua (L2), Trastorno por Déficit de Atención e Hiperactividad (TDAH), Escala Global de Inglés (EGI)

Descripción: Leer es una de las cuatro habilidades fundamentales del lenguaje en cualquier idioma. Provee al estudiante con un amplio rango de beneficios lingüísticos cuando es integrado en su proceso de aprendizaje. Asimismo, el hábito de leer se vuelve relevante en la universidad, ya que construye la carrera del aprendiz, conectándolo con diversos campos de su interés. Por ello, este estudio investigativo se enfocó en demostrar el impacto de esta técnica de lectura en la adquisición de vocabulario en un grupo de estudiantes de nivel intermedio alto de inglés en una universidad colombiana. En este estudio, los investigadores diseñaron una secuencia didáctica que buscaba medir la efectividad de la Lectura con el Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas. Los resultados revelaron que la adquisición de vocabulario mejoró al aplicar la Lectura Extensiva y el Aprendizaje Basado en Tareas en las aulas de inglés. Además, las características del vocabulario contextual, como las colocaciones, progresaron notablemente. También, la competencia lectora y el conocimiento léxico se desarrollaron considerablement

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1. Context of The Problem

Human beings need to acquire one language as a communication system to express ideas and desires. Nevertheless, because of recent social changes such as globalization, they have experienced the necessity of improving their communicative skills to deal with a variety of communicative domains. Particularly, from a social perspective, having mastered a significant amount of vocabulary knowledge in any target language is perceived as a high level of language proficiency (Nation, 2014). In Colombia, economic growth is closely related to the ability of the education system to improve the English proficiency of the population. Thus, being a fluent English speaker is considered as a superior skill that allows fulfilling employment requirements and can also lead to higher income expectations (British Council 2015, p. 6). As stated by the British Council, the education system in Colombia is currently implementing the *Nation Bilingual Programme* within the project *Colombia Very Well* from primary to a secondary level of schooling to improve English language learning and meet the criterion of higher education institutions where English is considered as the language of research and internationalisation (IBID, p. 13, 21).

Along these lines, one of the primary sources of meaningful input for learners is reading materials within different learning approaches, which seek to enhance their reading skills as well as to strengthen the input of new vocabulary items is reading materials (Pellicer & Sanchez, 2016, p.98). Therefore, educational institutions in Colombia have implemented the intensive reading approach (IR) as their primary source for vocabulary learning during an extended period of time. This approach consists of reading a written piece and then, encountering several questions which are meant to test reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and hypothetical situations (Insuasty, 2020, p.69). Although, nowadays there are other alternatives

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including the extensive reading approach (ER) in which students read extensively a set of reading materials based on their preferences (Al-Mansout et al., 2015, p.248). In doing so, vocabulary acquisition is unconsciously achieved by learners, through a continuous assessment process loop when using ER materials that ensures text comprehension.

Hence, the present research project aims to determine the effectiveness of the ER approach for vocabulary acquisition through the methodological approach of task-based learning (TBL) in upper-intermediate students of the Foreign Language Teaching Program at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS). Additionally, this study may complement the existing information about the use of ER to understand English Foreign Language (EFL) students' assumptions towards its use as a pedagogical tool in their learning process. That is to find whether ER can be included in a curriculum or a lesson plan as a reading instruction program. It is also relevant to highlight that the motivation for conducting this research emerges from the duty and need of Colombian teachers to improve their teaching techniques and facilitate their learners' experiences inside the classroom.

Consequently, this investigation was conducted through an action research design to determine the usefulness of ER on students' vocabulary acquisition. This type of research facilitates the process of collecting information along with the administration of a didactic sequence and a reflection process (Hine,2013). Notwithstanding, there were two main limitations to consider during the implementation of the project. First, the lack of grants given by the teacher for the didactic sequence to take place in their respective courses due to their need to cover a syllabus established by the institution. Also, another limitation was the students' willingness to participate as the selected sample for the study due to their lack of knowledge and interest

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towards the research project. Despite this, the present research applied the necessary adjustments regarding the limitations previously mentioned for the sake of fulfilling the research objectives.

2. Research Question

To understand the effects of the implementation of the ER approach, this action research study was based on the subsequent research question:

To what extent does the exposure to the Extensive Reading approach (ER) foster upper-intermediate English students' vocabulary acquisition at UIS through the TBL methodology?

3. Justification

Learning a foreign language encompasses not only mastering the four language skills but also learning a vast amount of vocabulary as it is considered one of the main components of language for communication to take place (Nation, 2014). As a matter of fact, learners are expected to learn from 5,000 to 10,000 words including GSL (General Service List) and AWL (Academic Word List) to become fluent in a second language (L2); this enables them to comprehend about 88.7 percent of a regular written text (Lessard-Clouston, 2013, p.1). That means that L2 students should acquire about 50 percent of the number of words known by native speakers, which are on an average of 20,000 words, so as to achieve effective communication and reading comprehension (IBID, p.2).

Even though language students are aware of the vital importance of expanding their lexical knowledge to achieve reading skills and transmission of ideas; they face two possible learning scenarios during their learning process. The first is active vocabulary learning, in which the teacher explains the possible definitions and uses of a word in a determined context, whereas the second is passive learning where students acquire lexical knowledge from sources of

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meaningful input (Nation, 2015, p.136). These scenarios are possible to be seen in Colombian educational institutions, especially the former one due to the expected learning outcomes from MEN regarding English language learning in Colombia (IBID, p.138). These objectives were based on the idea of supporting economic growth and establishing international relations that promote the increasement of the employment rate (May 2015, p. 6). For this reason, UIS establishes their teaching vocabulary enhancement methodology based on reading and listening activities that are well-known for improving this language component. These activities are focused on a set of strategies and aim to achieve a specific vocabulary goal such as reading for details to understand specific information, and direct follow-up questions of unknown vocabulary from the text (PEP, 2016).

Despite the fact that this current methodology allows students to learn vocabulary actively, there is a lack of implementation of a complementary approach that allows the passive acquisition of lexical items and the enhancement of general reading skills. To emphasise this, a compilation of studies from several authors have addressed the ER and found the fact that this approach would be helpful in different learning contexts. For instance, a meta-analysis research study conducted in Korea by Liu and Zhang (2018) proved that the use of ER is 67% more effective on upper-intermediate English language university students than other types of populations (p,4).

Nevertheless, it is imperative to analyse the notion of ER in the Colombian context since previous studies focused on EFL learners with a different written language system. As O'Brien et al. (2020) explain, there is a strong relationship between students' native language and the cognitive process of learning a foreign language such as English. That is to say that any language contains its own linguistic origins that can either facilitate or hinder the learning process of other

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languages due to their different written systems. Thus, taking into account how the Spanish language can influence the learning of the English language, it is crucial to recognize the role of the different approaches to help with the active and passive learning of lexical items simultaneously to scaffold the vocabulary proficiency of Colombian people. In that way, this research intended to solve the issue of determining whether the ER approach should be implemented as a complement or alternative approach when enhancing vocabulary acquisition in Colombian institutions of higher education.

4. Research Objectives

Accordingly, this study proposes the following general objective

- 1) To demonstrate the impact of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition in a group of upper-intermediate English students at UIS through the methodological approach of TBL.

4.1. Specific Objectives

Further, the following specific objectives arose to guarantee a thorough study:

- 1) To identify students' previous vocabulary knowledge preceding the implementation of the didactic sequence.
- 2) To design and implement a didactic sequence that fosters vocabulary acquisition through the ER and TBL methodological approaches.
- 3) To measure the effectiveness of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition with upper-intermediate-English-level students at UIS through the methodological approach of task-based learning.

5. Literature Review

5.1. Background and Related Research

Firstly, ER is a relatively new approach to reading, and several authors have investigated it from various perspectives. One of these studies was conducted by McLean and Rouault (2017) and it showed the advantages of the ER approach by proving that extensive reading is better than intensive reading. Findings suggested that even though both groups improved their reading proficiency, the ER group was more effective when reading a given passage. Likewise, Suk (2016) considered that reading is vital when acquiring a second language (L2) and that ER should be implemented in L2 teaching practices because it fosters students' cognition and provides them with several tools to overcome diverse texts. Additionally, Kim (2016) discovered that affective and cognitive reading improved when implementing ER approach showing that is a good way to immerse learners and promote the art of reading by themselves. Moreover, further investigation has shown greater advantages of the implementation of ER materials into the classroom like vocabulary gains and other features of language learning such as grammar and spelling.

Furthermore, previous studies showed a remarkable effect when applying the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition. Alsaif & Masraif (2019), Nation (2015), Ghanbaria & Marzban (2013), and Reynolds (2016) examined the enhancement of vocabulary acquisition incidentally by implementing brief passages such as stories that also aid to improve the acquisition and learning of contextually dependent vocabulary features which include collocations. Additionally, Pigada & Schmitt (2015), Eckerth & Tavakoli (2012), and Ro (2013) asserted that there is an advancement when developing reading proficiency and different lexical knowledge aspects such as spelling and grammatical characteristics. Moreover, the combination

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of this approach with different types of materials such as graded readers, book reports, and socialization among peers for a term period were highly effective to acquire vocabulary skills (Liu and Zhang, 2018, p.6). On the other hand, some ER researchers such as Daskalovska (2014), Miftah (2016), and Pellicer-Sanchez (2016) considered that giving students follow-up activities after the implementation of reading materials is particularly beneficial to generate form recognition, meaning recognition, and vocabulary gains. Moreover, these researchers emphasized that disregarding the type of reading used, it was crucial to implement contextual clues or marginal glosses that help notice and infer the meaning of new words from context.

Subsequently, several researchers such as Azari et al. (2012) and Nation (2015) identified the importance of implementing marginal glosses to fulfil the principles of ER and help students achieve the noticing process of unknown words and infer their appropriate meaning from context. Nation (2014, p.173-174) defined gloss as “a brief definition or synonym of unknown words provided in text in L1 or L2 usually in page margins”. In this context, marginal glosses demonstrated to be a useful tool when reading difficult texts, because they give the reader an accurate meaning or synonym that may not be inferred correctly from the text and which can lead to erroneously inferred meaning (Sato, 2012, p.60). Likewise, the use of glosses on reading materials helped to direct learners’ attention to unfamiliar words while encouraging them to process the meaning of terms during the reading without interrupting pauses (Teng, 2020, p. 789). Thus, due to the advantages that marginal glosses presented in facilitating comprehension of unknown words, this research study included textual glosses within ER materials to help direct students’ attention and to demonstrate the benefits that this combination might provide.

Additionally, in pursuit of complementing the ER approach with an efficacious language teaching methodology, Chen (2018) argued that the incorporation of the Task-Based Learning

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technique along with the appliance of diverse ER activities in the classroom was a powerful combination to boost students' incidental vocabulary acquisition. For instance, one of the main advantages of TBL that supported the implementation of ER was comprehensible input and productive output. Comprehensible input entails using adapted reading materials that can be implemented considering the student's knowledge level (IBID, p.407). On the other hand, productive output enables learners to demonstrate their understanding through the different reading tasks proposed by the teacher, as well as to promote critical thinking among students (IBID, p.409). Thus, this approach served this research study since it suited the process of ER implementation while allowing teachers to plan a logical sequence with different tasks, that purposely focus on meaning exchange and immersion within reading materials proposed as the main task.

Consequently, with the TBL approach, the teacher verified whether the acquisition of vocabulary and contextual language features were effective or not due to the exposure to the ER approach. According to Chen (2018, p.409), ER required the integration of language-learning activities that supported the use of the authentic language acquired through the different reading materials without the integration of specific vocabulary questions as it is used during IR examinations. This information encompassed the approach of TBL in which incidental learning occurs by recycling previous knowledge with meaningful tasks, which promotes students' self-learning. To sum up, the integration of the TBL and ER approaches allowed the researchers of this study to achieve an adequate presentation of comprehensible input and to receive from students a productive output throughout the implementation so as to demonstrate the effectiveness of ER for vocabulary acquisition.

6. Theoretical Framework

6.1. Reading Approaches

A significant number of research studies investigated the influence of two reading approaches for vocabulary acquisition in L2. The main approaches identified are Extensive Reading and Intensive Reading. IR is defined as a traditional approach where learners guided by a lecturer read some texts trying to grasp their meaning (Alsaif & Masraif 2019; Park, 2020; William and Vaughn 2019). Furthermore, the reading passages contained follow-up questions to assess language competence including grammar and vocabulary (Nakanishi, 2014). On the other hand, Alsaif and Masraif described that “ER entails reading long passages selected according to the students' preferences, which helps them to get a general understanding of the content of the reading passage” (p.40).

The study of ER involves some related researchers that show the meaningful effect that this approach has on vocabulary acquisition. These contributions included Alsaif & Masraif, (2019); Ghanbaria & Marzban, (2013); and Reynolds, (2016), who examined the impact on incidental acquisition of vocabulary by using narrative written pieces improving the acquisition of unintended lexical items. Additionally, findings from Eckerth & Tavakoli, (2012) showed that using academic and adapted academic passages from ER materials fostered the acquisition of spelling, meaning-connections and orthography among other aspects of vocabulary. In other words, previous studies revealed that reading proficiency and word retention were achieved effectively thanks to the implementation of ER in combination with unintentional acquisition of form-meaning vocabulary.

On the other hand and when it comes to IR, based on the studies using this reading approach as a methodology, authors such as (Daskalovska, 2014; Pellicer-Sanchez, 2016),

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asserted that this approach hindered students' vocabulary acquisition since the lexicon and the tasks proposed to understand the main aspects of the reading passages were difficult to acknowledge. Other authors such as Long (2015) stated that the IR approach is a time-consuming procedure since students have to search for the meaning of complex words very often impeding authentic reading comprehension. Nevertheless, all the authors previously mentioned highlighted the importance of implementing a reading approach that helps students assemble a more authentic understanding of new lexical items meaning.

6.2. Vocabulary Acquisition

A number of different techniques were performed in the classrooms with the aim of promoting the retention of vocabulary items through means of intentional or incidental learning. Following the preceding ideas, "intentional learning refers to the deliberate attempt to engage specific vocabulary to the learners' memory through vocabulary instruction" (Hung, 2015, p.1). On the contrary, "incidental vocabulary acquisition is defined as learners gaining the new words without the intent, but as a by-product of listening or reading" (Zou & Yan, 2019, p.39). Hence, several researchers proposed that vocabulary acquisition can happen unintentionally without being the aim of the classroom activities performed. That is to say, reading materials were considered as an unintentional tool for lexical acquisition while learners focus their attention on text comprehension (Alsaif & Masraif, 2019; Eckerth & Tavacoli, 2012; Wang, 2013; Wulandari, 2019).

Consequently, the teaching practices that focus on instructing students on specific vocabulary items following materials specifically aimed for this purpose; were planned to achieve intentional learning while the usage of unintentional materials such as readings was expected to achieve both text comprehension and incidental vocabulary learning. In the same

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vein, the Task-Based Learning approach seemed to fulfil the purpose of incidental learning to achieve unintentional vocabulary acquisition through the application of different tasks which follow reading materials. Thus, it was suitable to combine TBL with ER to demonstrate the impact of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition.

6.3. Task-Based Language Teaching Approach

Considering that most teaching methods are rooted in theoretical assumptions on the nature of language learning and linguistic communication, it is imperative to analyse the vocabulary acquisition process from ER along with a teaching methodology that intends to improve different competencies and communication in the target language. TBL is a teaching methodology that involves solving a task with the use of authentic language rather than answering questions about grammar or vocabulary (Douglas and Kim, 2015, p.3). The framework of TBL consists of three phases described as to

the first stage is the pre-task in which students are introduced and prepared for the task; the second stage is the task-planning report in which students work on their task and report their results to the class, and the third stage which is the reflection on the language areas used during the activities. (Chen, 2018, p.409)

These stages and role-play activities had the facility to be combined with situations in which learners are involved in their daily life. On the one hand, the pre-task activities are useful to introduce a certain topic creating expectation among students (Ellis, 2021). This was useful to engage students within the situations, characteristics and environments that reading passages show in their content. On the other hand, the task and post-task enabled students to perform a role in which they have the freedom to access and share the knowledge through different activities proposed by teachers (Révész, 2021). Regarding the ER approach, the use of tasks

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involved students to use vocabulary presented in the reading passages to practice and achieve acquisition easier.

Thus, the TBL teaching approach seemed to be useful when combined with a reading approach like ER since it gives students the chance to learn an L2 with vocabulary items through the implementation of meaningful tasks (IBID. p, 4). Besides this, TBL seemed to encourage learners' motivation, language development and promotes the habit of reading. That is to say that the use of meaningful tasks helped learners to acquire vocabulary from extensive reading passages since they could put into practice the vocabulary within a real communication setting using authentic language. Moreover, the combination of TBL and ER created positive and meaningful experiences to facilitate language development through vocabulary acquisition. Nonetheless, the combination of these approaches seemed to fulfil the research project purpose that is to demonstrate the impact of ER on incidental vocabulary acquisition.

7. Legal Framework

First, it is significant to highlight the fact that in Colombia, language teaching has caught the attention of diverse congress representatives who want to develop different linguistic policies. (Ortega, 2016). Therefore, the legal framework in Colombia is modelled by the establishment of a set of documents by the government that serves as a guide in many scenarios in which English is taught such as *Derechos Básicos de Aprendizaje (DBA)* and *Suggested Curriculum* (MEN, 2016). Through these official papers, the Ministry of Education proposes the objectives and expectations for the English language teaching practice in each level of education.

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The following research follows the active project suggested by the Colombian *National Bilingual Program* called *Colombia Very Well*. Among the vast majority of ambitious objectives, this program seeks to actively improve the English competencies concerning how the language is taught and learned in educational institutions and some enterprises dedicated to using the language as a business tool. (Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, 2015). Likewise, due to the nature of the present study, it is imperative to look at the Colombian by-laws regarding English learners' reading development in education. According to the MEN (2016), it is expected that after finishing high school, student's reading abilities allow them to:

Identify the purpose of medium-length oral and written texts related to topics of general and academic interest and share it with others using his/her knowledge about the structure of texts. For example, after reading different texts, the student identifies the purpose and type of each one. (p. 24)

Likewise, at UIS, where the present study was carried out, a set of expected outcomes were established for the students of the English language teaching program including overcoming several communicative and reading comprehension tasks (PEP, 2016, p.40). To accomplish adequate language skills, such as reading, teachers provide support to students' independent work through classroom strategies such as comprehension reading from texts (IBID, p.187). Moreover, related to the participants selected for this research study, it is worth mentioning that the university provides students with an extracurricular program called *Club de Lectura UIS*, in which they can enrol to improve their reading abilities. However, this extracurricular course does neither implement the English language nor focus on teaching how to read properly to analyse and facilitate reading comprehension of texts.

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Equally important, the foreign language teaching program of the university promotes different methodologies and approaches including TBL which is considered one of the most effective approaches when it comes to teaching English since it helps students to learn and work collaboratively among peers gaining knowledge through different tasks in the classroom (Galvis, 2012, p.202). To sum up, the aforementioned standards accomplished at UIS satisfy the demands made by the Colombian Ministry of Education. However, as a consequence of the few available extracurricular spaces for English students at UIS, the implementation of this study seemed to contribute to the initiatives that promote reading practices inside the university.

8. Methodology

Action research was selected as the methodology for this study because it provides researchers with the opportunity to understand how educational practices can be enhanced through reflection and action inside the classrooms (Hine,2013). According to Zuber-Skerrit (2016), this type of research helps the researchers to diagnose and determine the possible solution of an identified issue. In the same way, action research may provide them with the opportunity of improving teaching practices through a set of stages described in figure (1); these stages include planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (IBID, p.152).

The planning and acting stages enabled the researchers to make a plan based on a set of ideas compiled from the instruments and to implement possible strategies to solve the matter (Barnes, 2015). Thus, to plan the strategy for this study, the researchers implemented a set of reflective instruments to collect and analyse the necessities and possibilities of the students. As for the acting phase, the TBL with the ER approach was applied to provide insight into the effectiveness of these approaches on vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, the observing and

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reflecting stage were based on analysing relevant aspects of the participants as well as the initial and final results to draw conclusions on the study (IBID, p.108). For this reason, a set of planned and sequential activities along with the instruments were done to analyse the advantages or drawbacks as well as to determine the differences among variables.

As for the design, a mixed approach was selected as according to Scoles et al., (2014), This plan, allows analysing a set of data conjointly while gaining insight on how the use of one method can inform the use of another. Another factor to consider is the fact that having two types of data collection instruments mitigates in some way the weakness of the other (Regnault et al., 2018). That means that having these two instruments assisted in the inspection of the issue providing a more complete perspective of the possible needs of the students and gaining a more objective perception of the subject matter. Consequently, because of the advantages of action research, it appeared suitable to combine it with a mixed-method approach as it can provide a bigger picture on the matter allowing the purpose of this study to be achieved.

8.1. Hypothesis Management

As an attempt to address the question of this research which is: To what extent does the exposure to the Extensive Reading approach (ER) foster upper-intermediate English students' vocabulary acquisition at UIS through the methodological approach of task-based learning? A possible hypothesis that might be validated or nullified were proposed drawing on to the findings and conclusions of the study. Therefore, there were two variables to be considered:

- 1) The implementation of the Extensive Reading approach (ER) (Independent Variable)

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2) Vocabulary competence improvement (Dependent Variable)

Thus, these variables opened the path to the following hypothesis.

8.1.1. Alternative Hypothesis

The exposure to the ER approach through the methodological approach of task-based learning will foster upper-intermediate level students' vocabulary acquisition at UIS.

8.1.2. Null Hypothesis

The exposure to the ER approach through the methodological approach of task-based learning will not foster upper upper-intermediate level students' vocabulary acquisition at UIS.

Hence, the hypothesis listed above will be considered to achieve the main purpose of this research which is: to demonstrate the impact of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition in a group of upper-intermediate English students at UIS through the methodological approach of TBL.

9. Population and Sampling

9.1. Sample

For this study, the participants were 15 students from the English upper intermediate class from the Foreign Languages Teaching Undergrad Program at UIS. These students were eight women, seven men and one non-binary person, whose ages ranged from 15 to 29 years old. One of them reported one cognitive disability: Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). All participants were continuously exposed to the English language for two years due

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to the requirements of the program they are studying. Additionally, the students were asked to take an English course for 10 hours per week throughout the semester to achieve an advanced language proficiency level. Lastly, the students agreed to participate in this study by signing a consent form (see annex 1).

9.2. Sampling Technique

Participants were chosen through the purposive sampling technique. According to Etikan (2016), the purposive sampling technique is: “the deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses” (p.2). Thus, this type of sampling was adequate since it allowed researchers to select a specific population that fulfils some characteristics and that fits the study purposes. Consequently, the selected population for this research project was a group of upper-intermediate-level students at UIS who were exposed to the English language for a long time. According to Suk (2016), the ER approach is advisable to be implemented when EFL have acquired several amounts of lexical items; this is between 3000-4000 expressions (p, 76). For this reason, this type of sampling was the most suitable for this research project since upper-intermediate-level students reached a great deal of vocabulary in their different English courses. Moreover, the availability and willingness of the participants seemed to be assured because the population attends the same English course enabling the researchers to collect and analyse the information provided by the students as a whole.

10. Data Collection

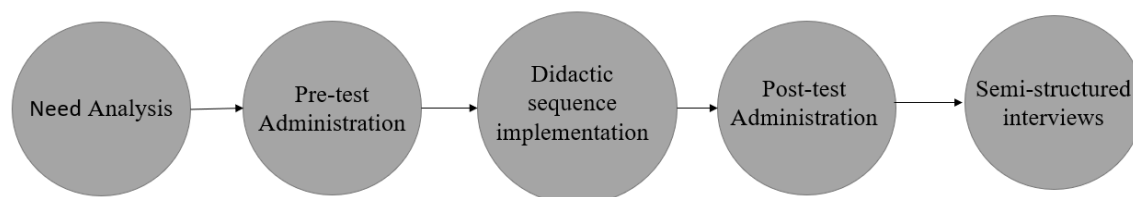
10.1. Procedure

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Figure 1 describes the instruments that were used to collect data. This graphic was designed by the researchers.

Figure 1

Procedure diagram



To achieve the objectives of this study, four data collection instruments were designed. These instruments included a needs analysis (see annex 2), a pre-test, a post-test, (see annex 3) and semi-structured interviews (see annex 4). Moreover, to avoid bias in their design, the instruments were tested and piloted with a population of similar characteristics. Apart from that, they were revised in detail including their wording and their structure. Therefore, the need analysis sought to collect participants' perceptions and assumptions towards their reading preferences. Furthermore, the administration of the pre and post-test was given to measure the effectiveness of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition. Finally, the semi-structured interviews helped the researchers to gather students' perceptions and experiences after the implementation of the didactic sequence.

10.2. Instruments

10.2.1. Needs Analysis

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The purpose of the needs analysis was to collect socio-demographic information and reading preferences. This instrument was divided into two parts; the first part was open-ended questions whereas the second one was a Likert scale.

10.2.1.1. Open-ended questions. These questions aimed to gather socio-demographic information about participants including age and gender, as well as relevant information to this research study such as their English level and some physical or mental disabilities regarding visual and aural impairment.

10.2.1.2. A Likert Scale. It contained questions about students' opinions, preferences, and behaviours concerning their reading habits (Joshi et al., 2015, p 402). Moreover, simple, and concrete language was used to avoid leading questions. The previous, according to Pimentel (2019, p.187) is vital to achieve the desired results and provide clear and accurate information delivered by the participants.

10.2.2. Pre-test and post-test

For the pre-test and post-test instruments, the same structure was used in its design. Firstly, both the pre-test and post-test was included a VKS and some multiple-choice activities with vocabulary from the GSE that is in accordance with their level of language proficiency. Secondly, only for the post-test it was added the vocabulary from the reading passages implemented in the didactic sequence. Finally, in terms of the strategies for the activities, both tests included some fill-in the gaps activities, word recognition, crossword, sentence completion and multiple-choice questions (Dougherty et al.,2020). These strategies intended to examine vocabulary size which is the amount of lexical items a learner should know and vocabulary depth

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that includes the ability to define and use a word and its variations such as synonyms and collocations within different situations (Iqbal & Komal, 2017).

10.2.2.1. Pre-test. A pre-test was applied to quantify the effectiveness of ER approach to acquire vocabulary. The intention for using this instrument seemed to be suitable to measure the initial vocabulary knowledge of the students before the intervention (Stratton, S, 2019; p 573). Therefore, the instrument was designed following two parameters. The first was a vocabulary knowledge scale (VKL) which helped to recognize how well students know vocabulary (Iqbal & Komal, 2017, p.2). The second was a set of multiple-choice activities based on the Global Scale of English (GSE) which is a global standard tool and database that estimates the English language progress according to the age and proficiency level of the learners proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference CEFR (Pratama & Yuliati, 2016). In brief, the pre-test included a VKL scale, and some lexical items proposed by the GSE to understand their current vocabulary knowledge according to their upper-intermediate level of language proficiency.

10.2.2.2. Post-test. Following the didactic sequence, a post-test was applied to evaluate the effectiveness of ER approach to acquire vocabulary. The purpose of implementing this instrument seemed to be practical when comparing both; the pre-test results with the intervention effects after applying the ER along with the task-based learning approach (Stratton, S, 2019; p 573). This test consisted of the VKL scale, a set of multiple-choice activities based on the vocabulary from the GSE and also, vocabulary from the reading passages that were applied in the didactic sequence.

10.2.3. Interviews

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A set of semi-structured interviews were implemented to identify participants' perceptions regarding the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition. According to Stuckey (2013), interviews are effective when it comes to exploring participants' experiences, behaviours, and opinions towards a specific phenomenon (p.4). Moreover, semi-structured interviews seemed to be suitable because they do not provide a set of formalized lists of questions, instead they enable the interviewers to discuss and provide details about a specific question, ask for clarification or provide further details about different issues they consider relevant (Scoles, 2015, p. 39). Therefore, the implementation of semi-structured interviews seemed to be suitable to conduct since it allows the researchers to complement the information provided by the instruments mentioned above because getting to know the perception of the participants enriches the possible results of the process of the intervention. Besides, the administration of this type of interview promoted reliability for the study since it contained some predetermined questions unlike other types which are not planned beforehand (Aung et al., 2021).

Apart from this, the information provided by the participants contributed with valuable information that is not possible to reach with other data collection tools for this research study like the pre and post-test. Hence, some participants were randomly selected after the intervention to be interviewed and were asked about their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the ER and the task-based learning approach on vocabulary acquisition. This information served during the triangulation process to acquire a better understanding and perspective of the results.

11. Data Analysis

To analyse data, the researchers used quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques were used to compile, organise, and categorise the information collected.

11.1. Quantitative

11.1.1. Need Analysis

The information collected in the needs analysis was examined through a simple statistical test. Researchers used SPSS to determine students' socio-demographic information, special educational needs, and reading preferences. The variables that were regarded within the simple statistical analysis were the mean which seeks "to summarise an entire dataset with a single number representing the data's center point or typical value" (Frost, 2021, p.1 para 2) and how is the dispersion of the data in relation to the mean through a statistical test called Wilcoxon sign rank test. In brief, the selection of these variables seemed adequate for drawing conclusions about the results of the test. The variable mean was crucial to recognize the trends or the most common vocabulary items acquired whereas the Wilcoxon variable informed on how close the data is to the total average of the results of the participants.

11.1.2. Pre-Test and Post-Test

Regarding the analysis of the pre-test and post-test, the instruments were divided into two sections. One of them to measure vocabulary size whereas the other to test vocabulary depth. For each of the sections it was assigned a score. Therefore, participants were given a point for each correct answer presented in the test and zero points for incorrect answers. The mean was considered to determine the average performance of the whole population. To interpret and analyse data, Microsoft Excel was used to compare the performance of the participants during the interventions. Afterwards, to understand and compare the differences between the pre-test and the post-test; a Wilcoxon sign rank test was run; this is a nonparametric and statistical test to define whether the differences between variables were meaningful (West, 2015). Consequently,

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these statistical techniques were used to gather the results and scores obtained in both the pre-test and post-test. Then, these independent variables were compared through the Wilcoxon sign rank test to determine the impact of ER on vocabulary acquisition.

11.2. Qualitative

11.2.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

Finally, the information collected through the interviews was transcribed verbatim, codified into categories, and interpreted to understand the participants' perceptions towards the use of ER and the task-based learning approach on vocabulary acquisition. (Chenail, 2015). These categories allowed the researchers to interpret the information trying to avoid bias and drawing on all the valuable contributions of the participants (IBIT, p. 256). It is also worth mentioning that the information provided by participants that do not align with related research, was preserved, as it may provide new contributions to the studied issue.

12. Planning and Implementing the Didactic Sequence

A didactic sequence was implemented by using activities related to the ER along with the task-based learning approach. According to Soler et al., (2013) "a didactic sequence is a set of planned and organised activities proposed by the teacher in which students can be scaffolded to the desired knowledge level" (p. 34). This didactic sequence contained a six-week intervention in which students were exposed to some written pieces along with collaborative tasks that would help them to acquire vocabulary items through incidental means. It is important to clarify that there were two sessions per selected piece of writing and each of these sessions contained the three stages of the TBL approach which included a pre-task, a main task, and post-task. Each

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intervention lasted two hours and during this time, the participants participated in a set of activities carefully planned to foster vocabulary acquisition. In addition, this didactic sequence allowed the researcher to adapt materials and activities according to the students' needs and reading preferences. In Table 1, the didactic sequence contained an explanation with the tasks including both the ER and TBL approaches as well as the vocabulary-based outcome which was designed in relation to the activities for each section.

Table 1

Detailed description of the activities through a didactic sequence

Extensive Reading: Didactic Sequence				
Week	Classes	Class Objective	Task	Vocabulary-based outcome
1	Session 1: Recognizing the characters	-Students will be able to choose a set of unknown words from the reading. -Students will be able to deduce the meaning of	Vocabulary race Students will create a list of unknown words from the reading individually. Afterward, students will try to guess the meaning of words from their partners' lists. At the end, the student that can guess	The meaning of the words from the vocabulary list will be inferred from the context of the reading.

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		some items from the reading.	more word meanings will be the winner.	
2	Session 2: Let's recap	Students will be able to create a concise summary of the reading using specific vocabulary from the text.	<p>Recall of the reading</p> <p>Students will write a 150-word summary condensing the main events of the reading, and various characteristics of the characters in the story. They will be expected to use specific words from the reading.</p>	The design of the summary will require using specific terms and vocabulary from the reading provided by the teacher.
3	Session 3: The character's counselor	Students will be able to write a short letter giving a piece of advice to one of the characters using the vocabulary from the text.	<p>Letter writer</p> <p>Students will write a letter to one of the characters giving it a piece of advice for whatever situation the character is going through.</p>	To create the letter, the students will use the vocabulary presented in the text to imitate the writing style, using collocations, and vocabulary expressions.

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4	Session 4: Speak your mind!	Students will be able to participate in a forum using specific vocabulary from the text.	<p>Forum</p> <p>Students will participate in a forum proposed by the teacher about their opinions on the characters' behaviours.</p>	The teacher will provide students with the vocabulary criteria to participate in the forum.
5	Session 5: Finding who is guilty.	Students will be able to present their deduction as if they were detectives solving the crime.	<p>Crime solvers</p> <p>Students will deduce from the reading, who the responsible for the crime is by providing reasons for their suspicion.</p> <p>This activity will be done by designing a short argumentative police report.</p>	To present the argumentative writing piece, students will act as a detective for the story. Students will imitate the writing style of the reading.
6	Session 6: Connecting the dots.	Students will be able to design a timeline including the	<p>Timeline</p> <p>Students will create a timeline describing a sequential order of</p>	The presentation of the timeline will contain useful phrases

13. Findings

13.1. Needs Analysis

The purpose of this initial survey in the study was to provide an insight into the practices and tendencies of a group of Colombian EFL students at Universidad Industrial de Santander when implementing the extensive reading approach to enhance vocabulary skills. The collected information aimed to enlighten researchers about the background of the participants to have a better understanding of the needs of the students. All the participants answered the survey, and the answers served as a reliable tool for the subsequent stages of the study, such as the design of the activities that would support the implementation of the previously mentioned approach.

The majority of the participants were from 15 to 29 years old. There were eight women, six men, and one non-binary student. When they were asked about any disability that would hinder their reading process, 93,3% of the population said they have no disability at the moment and only 6,7% of the population claimed to suffer from ADHD.

The survey was divided into three sections. The first section dealt with gathering sociodemographic information, reading habits and reading preferences.

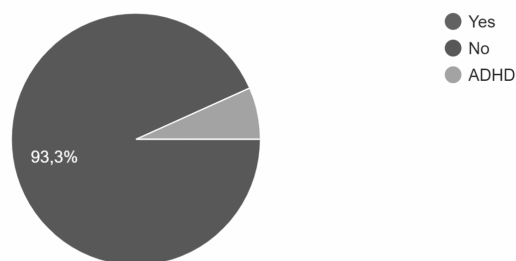


Figure 2. Percentages of conscious disabilities within the population

In the second section of the survey students had to select from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree* according to their perception. Some entries were *It's easy for me to follow my teacher's*

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instructions, I read seeking specific information that I need, and I read texts for a long period of time out of curiosity, among others. The analysis of the results showed that most students felt confident when facing instructions in the target language. This is evidenced in the coherence of answers for both entries, It's easy for me to follow my teacher's instructions and It's difficult for me to follow my teachers' instructions.

Moreover, it is chief to highlight the fact that a bigger number of students would rather read longer texts for professional interest and growth than reading a text for a long period of time out of curiosity. This may be the reason for the population that agreed with the statement, *I feel comfortable with the way in which my English teacher assesses vocabulary and reading comprehension*, due to the relation between the academic texts they read and the way in which such texts are approached in the classroom. Furthermore, there was a positive correspondence among the answers for both criteria related to one's costumes to ensure a complete understanding of a given text. The same amount of students claimed to agree on the statements *I use highlighting* and *I make annotations*.

Finally, regarding the type of text they read, students came up with various genres. Research papers and articles were classified as favorite by 26,7% of the population, while news and novels made up 40% and 53,3% respectively. Curiously enough, 80% of the sample chose storytelling books as their favourite which confronts the previously mentioned amount of students that would rather spend their time reading only academic texts.

To sum up, the overall examination of the answers provided in the needs analysis allowed the researchers to outline a comprehensive action plan for the pedagogical intervention. The type of readings proposed, and the corresponding activities to navigate through the acquired

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knowledge brought forth to students, are all aimed at facilitating the implementation of the extensive reading approach in the English classroom.

13.2. Quantitative Analysis

For the quantitative section of the study, the gathering-data instrument was made up of a pre-test and a post-test. Both followed the same structure containing multiple-choice activities with vocabulary which was consistent with students' language levels. More specifically, the strategies portrayed throughout the tests included some fill-in-the-gaps activities, word recognition, crossword, sentence completion, and multiple-choice questions (Dougherty et al.,2020). These tests aimed to explore the vocabulary size and the vocabulary depth of the population.

At this point, it is relevant to remember that vocabulary size is understood as the number of lexical items a learner should know, and vocabulary depth is described as the ability to define and use a word and its variations such as synonyms and collocations within different situations (Iqbal & Komal, 2017). Therefore, the following analysis intended to compare the obtained results regarding that both tests were administered to the same population.

13.2.1. Vocabulary size

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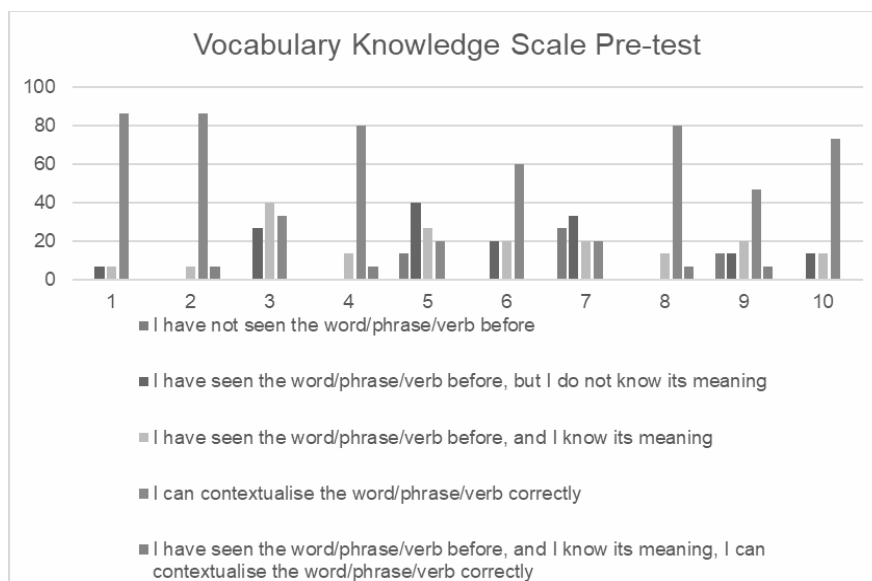


Figure 3. *Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (pre-test results)*

For the first exercise in the pre-test, most of the chosen words were mostly verbs and phrasal verbs that students are expected to know at their proficiency level. It is clear from Figure 3 that most of the population was able to contextualize the terms. This means they were able to understand and place them into any given circumstance. However, from words 3 to 7 -mainly phrasal verbs- it was noticeable that a considerable number of students have seen the verbs but do not know their meaning, suggesting this type of language is not fully acquired at this point.

After the didactic sequence was carried out, the first exercise in the post-test revealed the vocabulary size of the students upgraded which is shown by the exponential increase of participants who could contextualize the words correctly this time.

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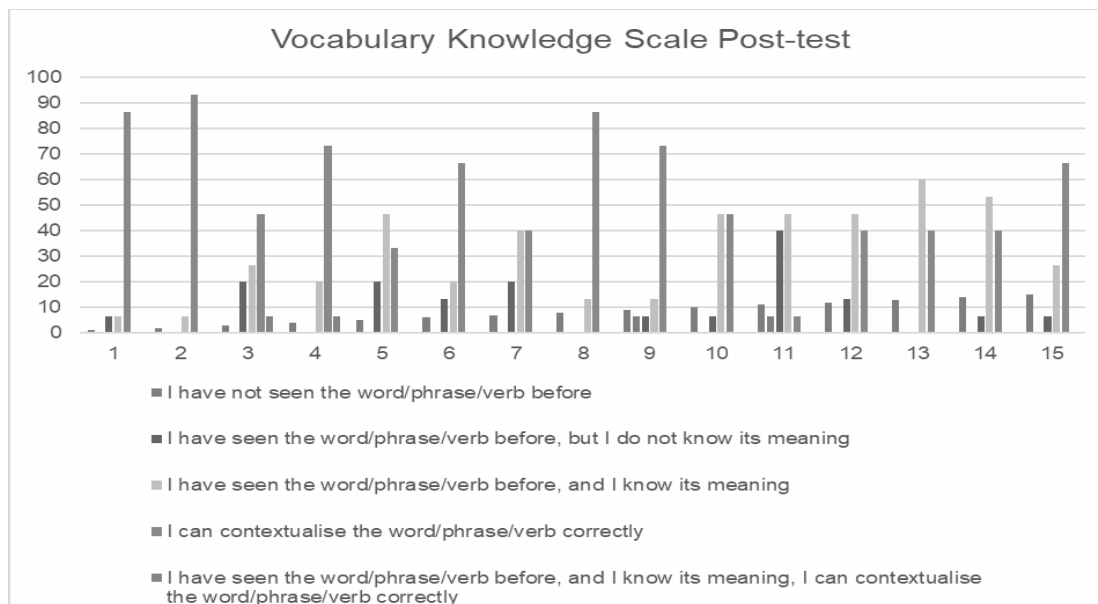


Figure 4. Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (post-test results)

Additionally in figure 4, learners who said they had seen the word before but do not know its meaning decreased, whilst the number of participants who now have seen the word and know its meaning significantly increased. This is understood as an improvement in the population's vocabulary width.

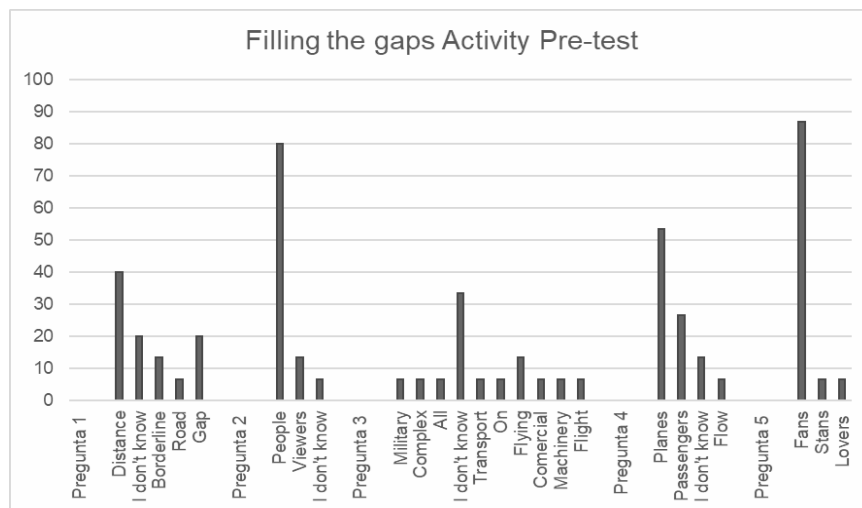


Figure 5. Filling the gaps (pre-test results)

For the second exercise in figure 5, the test takers had a set of phrases with one missing word. They had to pick out the most suitable term from their English vocabulary knowledge and

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write it into the gap. Pre-test results indicated they have a satisfactory depository of English vocabulary as manifested in questions 1, 2, 3, and 5 where a great number of participants wrote the appropriate lexical items. Nevertheless, it was curious to notice that question 4 was the only one requiring a wider range of vocabulary insight, and most students failed at it. This might have occurred because before implementing the didactic sequence along with the ER approach, students did not have the chance to expand their vocabulary adequately.

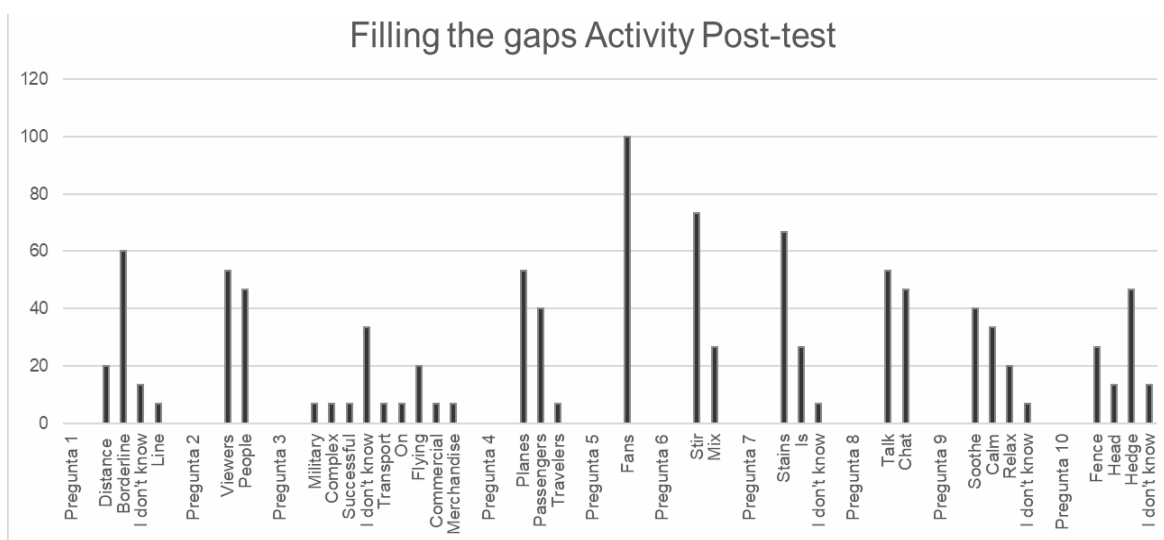


Figure 6. Filling the gaps (post-test results)

There were two main reasons why in the fill in the gaps activity, the post-test exhibited a fine extension in the participants' vocabulary as in figure 6. First, the number of accurate words for questions 1 to 5 improved compared to the results in the pre-test. For instance, for question 1, 60% of the learners chose *borderline* as the appropriate term. Second, they measured up for questions 6 to 7 when they were expected to provide more specific lexical items. For example, in questions 7 and 8 they chose *stir* and *stains* as their options fulfilling what was expected after the implementation of ER. In comparison to the pre-test result, students used to write more basic terms to complete the sentences but during the post-test activity, they used more advanced-level words as seen in the texts during the implementation.

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13.2.2. Vocabulary depth

Two of the exercises in the instrument aimed at measuring students' ability to use the English language in its different forms and contexts. One of them was the Synonyms exercise where learners had to choose the closest word in meaning to the stated one from a list of given terms. For example, in figure 7, for the word *Actually*, they had to select from *currently*, *indeed*, *nowadays*, and *surprisingly*. The overall results denoted an accurate understanding and usage of the language as stated by the answers to questions 1, 2, and 4. It was unexpected that most of the population said *shape* is the most suitable synonym for the word *figure*. This may be caused by the false cognate in Spanish *figura* which indeed has a similar meaning to shape in English.

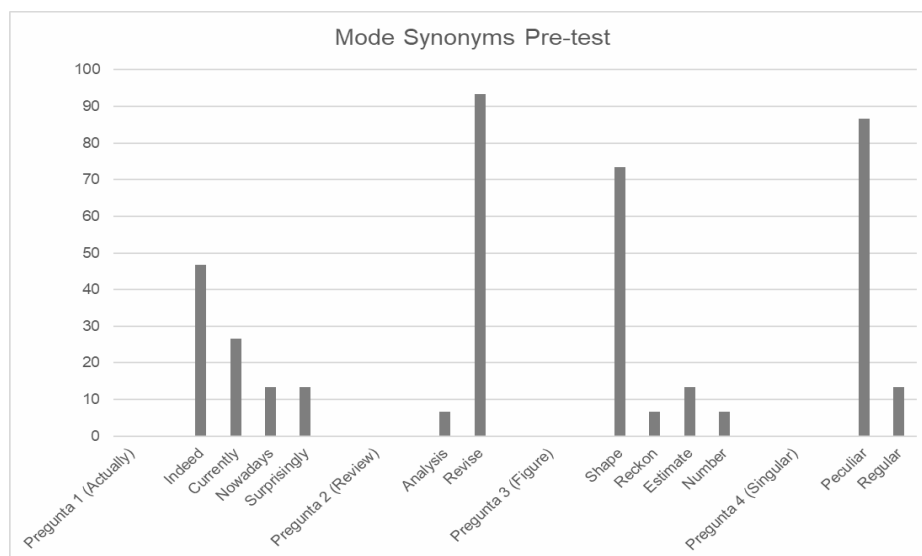


Figure 7. Synonyms (pre-test results)

It was interesting to observe the results for the same exercise in the post-test. After the process of getting students in contact with the extensive reading approach, it was salient to bring up their refinement through it. For instance, the answer to question 1 had 64% of students choosing *Indeed* as the accurate synonym, a lower percentage for words as *Surprisingly* and *Currently*, and complete disappearance of the word *Nowadays* as the selected option. Similarly, for the word *Singular* 100% of the population were supporters of *Peculiar* as the adequate one.

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In contrast to what was analysed in the pre-test, the post-test showed a better understanding of the vocabulary. This is sustained by 67% of the sample choosing *Number* as the correct synonym for the word *Figure*. Furthermore, when encountering new terms from the ones in the pre-test, learners portrayed an excellent performance in identifying the correct terms. As an illustration of this, figure 8 manifested an appropriate student development from questions 5 to 10 (e.g., *Unconventional* with 63% for the word *Queer* and *Cold* with 92% for *Draught*).

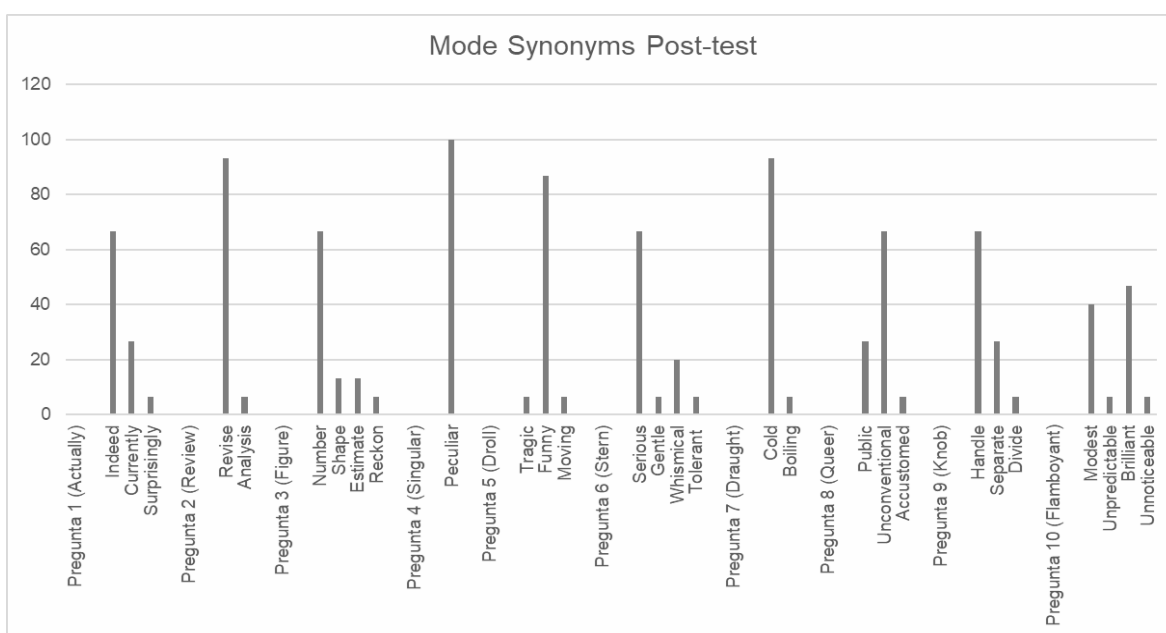


Figure 8. Synonyms (post-test results)

The second exercise aimed at measuring students' ability to use the English language in its different forms and in different conditions through a Collocation-writing activity. Learners had to complete five sentences with the appropriate preposition to form common English collocations.

As revealed in figure 9, the population was not completely homogeneous in their answers. Only answers to question 1 were significantly correct. From questions 2 to 5 it is evidenced that students varied in their answers. For example, in question 4, 27% of the

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population indicated not knowing what could be the correct preposition, and the rest remained indecisive between *Out*, *Outside*, and *On*.

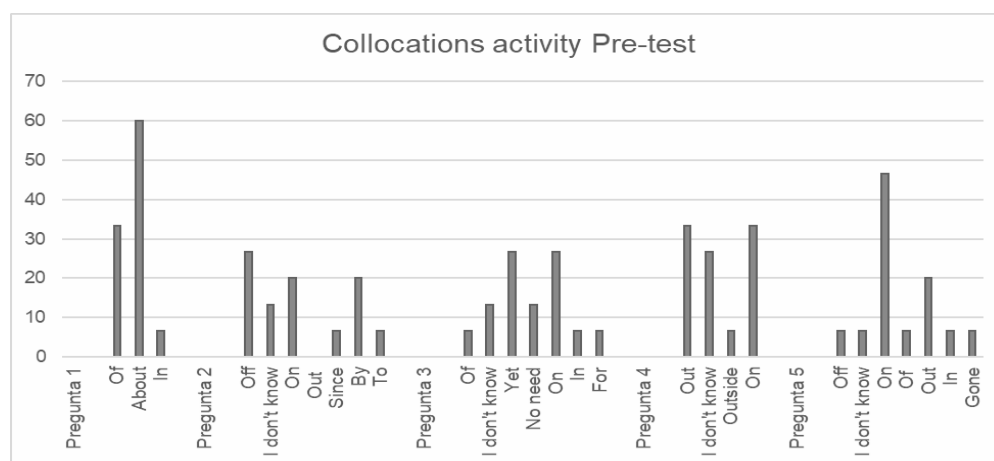


Figure 9. Collocations (pre-test results)

In general, there was a general ignorance of everyday English collocations throughout the sample of the study during the pre-test.

Next, the results of the Collocations' activity from the post-test confirmed an enlargement in the population's capacity to determine the best usage of certain items in the English language. Students excelled at recognizing the exact preposition according to the given sentence. When comparing the pre-test and the post-test, it became pertinent to recognize a powerful boost in questions 1 to 5, and an estimable outcome in the face of more difficult collocations for EFL learners. This was displayed in the rise of the percentage of people choosing the correct answer to question 4, and its correspondent decrease in incorrect prepositions. In addition, answers to questions 7 to 10, in figure 10, were proof that students were better prepared to use collocations after the post-test.

Finally, once the pre-test and post-test were applied it was necessary to compare the differences between them. To interpret and analyse data, Microsoft Excel was used to compare the performance of the participants during the examinations. Then, the variables were compared

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through the Wilcoxon sign rank test to determine whether the differences between variables were meaningful (West, 2015), and the impact of ER on vocabulary acquisition.

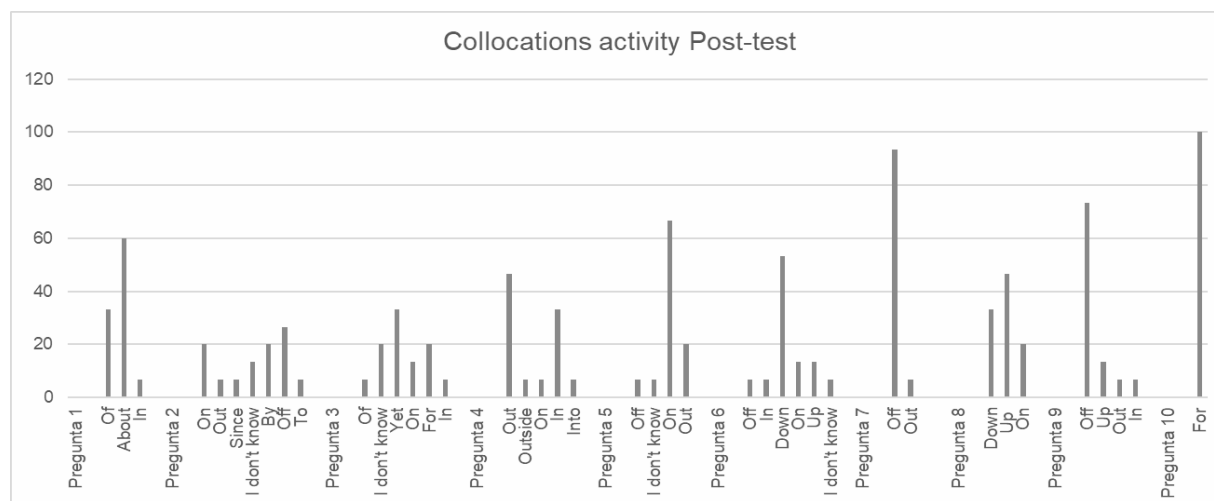


Figure 10. Collocations (post-test results)

Following the analysis thrown by the Wilcoxon sign rank test for the pre-test, the overall performance of the population was 28%. On the other hand, the overall performance was 50,86% in the post-test. The difference between the two (i.e., 22,86%) was meaningful and it allowed concluding there was an actual increase in knowledge in EFL students when implementing ER in the classroom. Moreover, the impact on vocabulary acquisition was supported by the analysis of the tests in both vocabulary size and vocabulary depth categories. To sum up, the results confirmed the adequacy of bringing the ER approach to the English classroom.

13.3. Qualitative Analysis

Regarding the qualitative component of the present study, researchers designed an interview as the main instrument. This tool provided a reliable source to understand the participants' perceptions of the use of ER and the TBL approach to vocabulary acquisition (Rigau-Pérez et al., 2016). As for the process, the information was collected from July 18 to July

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25, 2022. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, codified into categories, and interpreted according to the main objectives of the research.

The interview had 3 sections to facilitate the analysis of the data. The first component consisted of 3 questions aimed at obtaining general information about the overall experiences of the students after the implementation of the didactic sequence, as well as the different tasks and strategies proposed by researchers. The second constituent tried to discover the perceptions and opinions held by the sample around using ER as a means of acquiring new English vocabulary (... tried to discover the strategies to acquire vocabulary through ER). Finally, the third segment explored the effects of the ER approach to vocabulary acquisition. It is relevant to mention that all participants were asked for their willingness to take part in the interview, and no information was used for any other purpose but the study itself.

13.4. Interview Analysis

13.4.1. Didactic sequence perceptions

Findings revealed that using TBL in combination with the ER approach within a didactic sequence brought mixed opinions. P1 alleged that the availability of instructions along the task proposed by using the TBL approach was a good tool to understand the content proposed during the intervention. Also, P2 and P3 praised the versatility of the task since, for them, the instructions were very clear and easy to follow. On the same wavelength, P4 added that “the instructions were very concise” whereas P5 highlighted that the instructions were crystal clear, organized, and didactic making them easy to follow when it comes to writing. Apart from this, other participants pointed out the creativity dedicated to the activities along with the intervention. P2 confessed that by doing known activities, she could understand and learn the content exposed

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in reading passages presented. Lastly, several participants emphasized their approval of the tasks included within the didactic sequence. P1 eulogized the opportunity to see with clear examples the instructions before doing the activity; she added “the easy part is that we had everything explained in a form so we could see step by step the things that we have to do”.

On the other hand, P2, P3, and P4 confessed that although the activities were easy-to-follow; the reading passages were very extensive and with a difficult vocabulary to understand without a thesaurus. P3 added: “For me, it was difficult to go back to the vocabulary and find the words because you don't understand. It was quite difficult to understand the vocabulary”.

Similarly, P3 highlighted that she did not appeal to the use of classic novels because it was quite boring for her to read, understand and memorize unemployed words whereas P2 revealed that for her, it was overwhelming to find a lot of new and unknown vocabulary. Lastly, some participants found that the level of difficulty of the reading passages proposed along the intervention acted as an obstacle. For example, P5 declared that some parts of the text were complicated to follow and hard to understand, whereas P3 admitted she did not understand all the content because some parts of the reading passages were unintelligible to her.

13.4.2. Vocabulary acquisition strategies: an ER approach perspective

The sample described three chief tactics in their EFL classroom regarding vocabulary acquisition strategies. First, as P1 and P4 assured, one strategy consisted of placing the new lexical items they learned into an appreciable context for them, such as jokes or everyday life language. The second strategy mentioned is creating a relation between the new word and the knowledge students already possessed. P5 claimed, “I usually relate the words that I learn to the things that I already know” meaning they did not like to learn by heart or simply memorize. This

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is also supported by P2 when he said, “I see that words with something I already know in the world, like a concept that I know”. For this procedure, the interviewees claimed they also brought childhood memories or experiences that helped them understand the concept better. Finally, the last strategy was found in class activities usually proposed by the professor. For instance, P3 asserted that most of the time that acquisition occurs through reading activities, or games.

When it comes to individual mechanisms, there were two main practices carried out by the students. One of them was highlighting words and concepts that were new to them as apprentices of the English language. Almost all subjects agreed on using this strategy because it helped them remember the terms in the future and their importance. As stressed by P4, “I feel like I’m going to use it in the future or like I could use it in the future. It is important to [*sic*] me to learn it”. The other tactic implemented by the sample is the use of margin annotations. They confirmed taking notes and writing related words and their meaning. Some participants even declared doing both, as P5 uttered “I like to highlight them and write them on one side of the page if it is paper”.

In addition, it drew researchers’ attention to the fact that all interviewees recognized the implementation of reading passages in the classroom so as to reinforce specific vocabulary. For instance, P2 said, “she really likes passages” referring to the professor. And as a complement to this information, P3 claimed the professor takes those passages out of the course book. However, P2 added their professor also implements interactive activities, and role plays to boost the lexical knowledge in the classroom.

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Nevertheless, though reading seemed to be a strong source of input in the classroom it did not look like it is a fundamental part of the day-to-day life of the population. This is reinforced by the statements made by P1, P2, P3, and P5 where researchers found a firm negation to being avid readers. They rather read what they found on social media posts or read university-related texts. For instance, P5 said, “I’m not the *[sic]* kind of reader, I don’t usually enjoy reading”, adding they thought reading a book is too much for them. Instead, P5 expressed a liking for reading for academia. P2 argued they were used to reading the lectures they got as assignments at university, and P3 confirmed “I do like more for *[sic]* related to schoolwork”. P1 added they read “about social media reels on Instagram” and “I often read those TikTok *[sic]* that have long paragraphs”. The highest frequency among the part of the sample was twice a month, as stated by P2 when answering how often they read English passages. Only P4 declared reading every day in their spare time, adding they preferred reading literature and poetry.

Notwithstanding, although the population claimed not to be eager readers, they asserted they prefer being able to choose what they are reading. As alleged by P4 they preferred reading their own preferences and not something they are forced to read. The main reason for this, following P4 declaration, was “because sometimes *[sic]* just easier to concentrate on a text and try to understand them when you actually like what is being said”. P1 also supported the idea of being able to choose what they read justified by the fact that for them reading university texts is tedious. The chief reason was that academic passages are rather too formal in their style, or they did not appeal to them as readers. In contrast to this, P5 insisted “If I wanted to read something *[sic]* is easier if someone gave it to me and I read it instead of me deciding to do it because If I am the one deciding, the decision is going to be not reading”.

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In the end, the implementation of the ER approach signified an enhancement in the sample regarding their vocabulary acquisition. Learners admitted they felt a considerable improvement during and after the didactic sequence was held. As P1 repeated, “of course we have improved”. P3 thought the whole experience was positive because “it allows us to understand a lot *[sic]* more vocabulary to learn so I think it was positive”. It is pertinent to mention as well that P5 underwent a growing process they expressed as “It makes you feel small but in the way that you can still grow”. Lastly, it is worth mentioning the fact that the implementation of the project was so positive that learners not only acquired the vocabulary but also started bringing it up in their life, as supported by P4 when claiming “I think I started using some words”.

13.4.3. Perception of the Extensive Reading approach

Regarding the perception held by the sample of the ER approach; first, it was noticeable they liked being able to choose the readings they would be assigned. The opportunity to influence the decision about the passages made them feel involved and gave them a sense of compromise. P5 asserted, “I feel like *[sic]* considered here like you are taking into account what kind of things I really enjoyed, so I appreciated it”, whilst P4 complemented by saying, “I think *[sic]* is very important because, uhh not only you feel personally invested in the things that you are reading, but you are *[sic]* motivated and actually interested in learning what is being said and read”.

Also, learners compared the impact of ER with the impact of IR as the approaches to acquire vocabulary. P1 and P2 praised the implementation of ER arguing that when they have the choice to choose, they did not feel pressure to learn and that allows them to feel free during the

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learning process, as well as comfortable. By doing so, P2 claimed “I remember more the vocabulary”, to which P3 added, “it's better for you to... to... to read something that you... generally enjoy so maybe it can be easy [*sic*] for you to understand”. When referring to ER, P5 thought they did not only learn “one or two” words, but they learned a lot in the same context. For her, in “intensive reading they give you one word, and they tell you to learn this word, but in this way, you have a lot of words and you of course can focus on some more words”.

Participants of the study stated that ER proved to be an effective approach when it comes to English vocabulary acquisition in the classroom. They declared that they had improved and that they found captivating the fact they learned terms they usually do not cover in their class by doing the same (i.e., reading). This is supported by P4 when he stated, “Actually, it helps, yes, ummm it provides like, new texts that have a lot of words that you don't usually see in an English classroom”. Moreover, they felt the activities proposed in relation to the passages fostered that acquisition. To P2, those activities meant a challenge to put into practice what they were learning, and it was a contrast for her because it was not a matter of reading and highlighting only. An engrossing comment by one of the interviewees casted an insight on the concept of marginal glosses as a complement to the ER approach. P5 affirmed “it helped because also there are some words unknown [*sic*] so, you know what that means but you don't know what they mean in that context so the glossary was helpful” when asked about the glossary at the end of each reading.

In contrast, intensive reading has been present in the classroom for so long that students feel the need to keep in mind and learn as they have learned up to this point. It showed that bringing forward the ER to the classroom will be an upcoming challenge. This was strongly based on disclosures done by the sample where they recognized they still feel remembering will

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help them learn better. For instance, P1 alleged, “in my case I think I need to memorize, and I need to do a lot of exercises”. Similarly, P4 confirmed, “it is better for me to memorize”.

Eventually, ER demonstrated being an approach that enhances not only reading but other English skills. For example, learners seemed to notice a positive development in their writing. As mentioned by P4 and P5, ER helped them realize they were writing more accurately in English. P4 declared, “I mean you learn to write better” and P2 also shared, “I think I improved grammar and writing”. P3 complemented this by saying they read faster now, and they have experienced a notable upgrade in their vocabulary acquisition.

14. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed at demonstrating the impact of the ER approach on vocabulary acquisition in a group of upper-intermediate English students through the methodological approach of TBL. The obtained results indicated that although IR seems to be strongly ingrained, EFL learners do experience an enhancement when ER was implemented in the classroom along with TBL. Researchers found that vocabulary acquisition boosts when adhering to ER, which encompasses claims made by Kim (2015), when established that not only practical but also cognitive reading improves when implementing the ER approach. Moreover, findings clarified that aspects such as vocabulary size and depth are refined through ER, as portrayed by the comparison between the pre-test and the post-test; and that signifies a greater performance in linguistics tasks and demands made to students on a daily basis as users of the English language. The previously mentioned complements was what Suk (2016) suggested when saying that ER should be implemented in L2 teaching practices since it provides students with several tools to overcome diverse texts. Despite results showing texts are properly brought to EFL classrooms at UIS, this study revealed the effect when accompanied by the ER approach.

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Likewise, quantitative data supported what was examined by Ghanbaria & Marzban (2013), Alsaif & Masraif (2019), and Nation (2015) when declaring that ER improves the acquisition and learning of contextually dependent vocabulary features such as collocations. On the other hand, qualitative data proved what was indicated by Pigada & Schmitt (2015), Eckerth & Tavakoli (2012), and Ro (2013) when observing there was an advancement when developing reading proficiency and different lexical knowledge aspects such as spelling and grammatical characteristics. One key factor that seemed to impact students' perception regarding ER was the catalogue chosen for the implementation. Despite there was an initial process of inquiring about reading preferences, the sample expected different types of passages. Similar to what was found by Tien (2015), the implementation of ER required students to choose more directly the texts to read. This suggested professors at UIS should design a strategy for choosing the text brought to their courses, where students feel taken into account. Such measures will enhance students' motivation, as proven by the present research study.

This investigation followed the considerations made by Daskalovska (2014), Miftah (2016), and Pellicer-Sanchez (2016) in terms of providing students with follow-up activities after reading the different passages in aid of generating form recognition, meaning recognition and vocabulary gains. In harmony with implementing the ER approach, TBL proved to be an efficacious technique to increase students' incidental vocabulary acquisition, as argued by Chen (2018). Furthermore, Chen (2018) also claimed ER requires the integration of language-learning activities that supports the use of the authentic language acquired through the different reading materials. This was displayed throughout the whole implementation of the study allowing researchers to conclude TBL fulfils the requirements for such integration. Unexpectedly, this research served as proof of the benefits of implementing marginal glosses as support for learners

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when reading because the use of glosses on reading materials helps to direct learners' attention to unfamiliar words while encouraging them to process the meaning of terms during the reading without interrupting pauses (Teng, 2020, p. 789). Azari et al. (2012) and Nation (2015) even asserted the importance of such implementation to fulfil the principles of ER and help students achieve the noticing process of unknown words and infer their appropriate meaning from context. Hence, the present study fulfils the alternative hypothesis.

In sum, this investigation contributes to the ongoing process of discovering the advantages of bringing the ER approach to the English classroom. Not only will enlighten the path for Colombian EFL professors at UIS, but it will bring the Colombian context to the implementation of a technique that has proved to foster students' learning process as well. It is a fact that the IR approach is still widely implemented; therefore, it is necessary to continuously promote the execution of the ER approach in Colombian EFL classrooms. Researchers like to suggest the faculty to come up with new designs that help put English students in contact with reading as a means to strengthen their English language learning.

15. Limitations and further research

There were three main limitations to the present study. First, the population did not have the expected language level. Besides, basic concepts such as summary and how to write a good one were unknown to the students. Therefore, the proposed activities took more time than researchers contemplated when designing the didactic sequence. Second, due to a strike at Universidad Industrial de Santander three out of six sessions had to be taken asynchronously. The interaction got disrupted, and close monitoring was almost impossible. Lastly, it would have been more appropriate to let the sample choose the passages in order to foster their engagement

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even more. Moreover, to allow participants not only to express their preferences regarding genres, but also to choose the titles to read.

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